

Claims

1. A method of providing recognition for donors donating to non-profit organizations, the method comprising:

transmitting to a donor over a computer network a form for the donor to use to enter a donation to the non-profit organization;

entering onto the form an amount of the donation and payment information;

transmitting the form over the computer network to the donation servicer;

electronically transferring funds from the donor to the non-profit organization; and

automatically adding the donor to a donor list published on the computer network.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

entering additional information about the donor; and

presenting to a person viewing the donor list through the computer network the additional information about the donor in response to selecting a donor from the list.

3. The method of claim 1 in which entering onto the form an amount of the donation and payment information includes entering personal information and indicating what parts of the personal information will be publicly accessible over the computer network.

4. The method of claim 1 in which entering payment information includes entering a credit card number or a bank account number.

5. The method of claim 1 in which the donor list is arranged by size of donation and further comprising displaying the size of donation required to obtain a position on the list.

6. A method of increasing charitable donations to an organization, the method comprising:

providing a network server (for communicating with individuals over a computer network;)

automatically accepting donations over the computer network; and

automatically publishing on the computer network information about the donation, thereby providing immediate recognition to the donor.

7. The method of claim 6 in which automatically publishing information about the donation includes automatically publishing information about the donor.

8. The method of claim 7 in which automatically accepting donations over the computer network includes the donor entering information about the donor.

9. The method of claim 8 in which the donor entering information about the donor includes indicating which parts of the information is to be published.

10. The method of claim 6 in which automatically accepting donations over the computer network includes automatically processing an electronic funds transfer from the donor to the organization.

11. The method of claim 6 in which automatically publishing information about the donation includes providing a link to an electronic page including information about the donor.

12. The method of claim 6 in which automatically publishing on the computer network information about the donation includes publishing a donation list including the donation.

13. The method of claim 12 in which the donation list is arranged in order of donation level and further comprising displaying the level of donation required to achieve a specified position on the list.

14. The method of claim 6 further comprising:
totaling donations categories based upon information provided by the donors; and
publishing donation totals by category on the computer network.

15. The method of claim 14 in which the categories represent competing groups of donors, the method further comprising using the totals published on the computer network to encourage the competing groups of donors to increase donations.

16. The method of claim 6 in which automatically publishing on the computer network includes publishing the information on an Internet Web page.

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17. An apparatus for increasing charitable donations to an organization, the apparatus comprising:

a network server for communicating with individuals over a computer network;

a program executing on the network server to automatically accept donations over the computer network; and

a program executing on the network server to automatically publish on the computer network information about the donation, thereby providing immediate recognition to the donor.)

18. The apparatus of claim 17 in which the network server communicates over the Internet.

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19. The apparatus of claim 17 in which the program executing on the network server and automatically publishing information about the donation publishes the information on a World Wide Web page on the Internet.

20. The apparatus of claim 17 in which the program executing on the network server and automatically publishing information about the donations publishes an ordered list of donations.

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